

April 8, 2013

As the owners of Curbside Cupcakes, employers, and long-time DC residents, we write to voice our grave concerns about the latest version of food truck regulations released by the Gray administration.

We have put our heart and soul into growing our business. When we opened Curbside Cupcakes in 2009, there were only a few food trucks serving the District. Over the past 3 years, our business has grown, and the food truck phenomenon in DC has also grown. We currently operate 3 trucks and a kiosk at Union Market. We have 8 employees and numerous local vendors that we support with our business.

We have serious concerns about the proposal to grant new, sweeping powers to unelected Department of Transportation officials to decide where food trucks can and cannot serve customers by establishing Mobile Vending Zones that will limit our ability to serve in the city's most popular vending areas.

The new regs propose to restrict food trucks where there are fewer than 10 feet of "unobstructed" sidewalk -- without clearly defining what an "obstruction" is, thereby threatening to limit food trucks in popular parts of downtown.

Initially we were encouraged by some of the improvements in this latest version of the regulations, such as the elimination of the ice cream truck rule. But after closer investigation, we realized that other changes simply don't work. The administration of the Mobile Vending Zones is entirely unclear. In addition, the sidewalk restrictions would essentially ban us from operating our business in our most popular locations. These regulations give the illusion of progress while actually eliminating our ability to compete for customers where folks have come to enjoy and expect food truck options.

The mobile component of our business is critical. Being able to move about the city from spot to spot is at the heart of being a mobile vendor. We choose our locations based on where customers ask us to go. As a mobile business, if you eliminate 80% of the places where we currently vend, you are essentially shutting us down. We suffer, our employees suffer, and the customers that deserve to be able to choose where they spend their money suffer.

Please re-draft the proposed regulations which in effect systematically eliminate the entrepreneurial small businesses that have come to be a very popular part of the dining options here in Washington DC.

Sincerely,
Sam & Kristi Whitfield